

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 IO-14 JUSE-00  
NSAE-00 SNM-02 TRSE-00 NSC-05 OES-07 OMB-01 PA-02  
PRS-01 DODE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00  
/054 W

-----089185 270235Z /73

O 270150Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3801

DEAHQS WASHDC IMMEDIATE

EPIC EL PASO TX IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 12421

EPIC PASS ALSO TO JACQUES KIERE

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: SNAR, MX

SUBJECT: NARCOTICS - MEXICAN REPORTING OF EPIC DIRECTOR'S  
PRESS CONFERENCE

1. MEXICO CITY'S "EXCELSIOR" OF JULY 26 FEATURES FULL-  
PAGE HEADLINE ("US EXPECTS INCREASE IN NARCOTICS TRAFFIC-  
KING FROM MEXICO") ON POLICE PAGE WITH SUBHEAD ("EX-AIR  
FORCE PILOTS WOULD BRING IN THE DRUGS") OVER 24 COLUMN-  
INCH STORY WITH BY-LINE OF FAUSTO FERNANDEZ PONTE,  
EXCELSIOR CORRESPONDENT. REQUEST IMMEDIATE GUIDANCE.

2. FREE TRANSLATION FOLLOWS:

(A) "WASHINGTON DC, JULY 25: THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF  
JUSTICE PREDICTED TODAY THAT, BASED ON INFORMATION OB-  
TAINED, THERE WILL BE A SHARP INCREASE IN THE ILLICIT  
TRAFFIC OF DRUGS FROM MEXICO IN COMING MONTHS.

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(B) "IN A SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE REPORT, PUBLISHED TODAY,  
THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT FURTHER STATES THAT 80 PERCENT  
OF THE DRUGS WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE UNITED STATES  
BY AIR, USING EX-PILOTS OF THE U.S. AIR FORCE.

(C) "THE REPORT WAS PREPARED BY THE EL PASO INTELLIGENCE  
CENTER, A GOVERNMENT OFFICE WHICH OPERATES 24-HOURS PER

DAY COLLECTING AND ANALYZING INFORMATION ON DRUG TRAFFIC TOWARD THE UNITED STATES. THE CENTER DISTRIBUTES ITS INFORMATION TO POLICE ORGANIZATIONS OF VARIOUS COUNTRIES, INCLUDING MEXICO.

(D) "THE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTER, ARTHUR J. FLUHR, SAID DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE CALLED TO EXPLAIN THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE INFORMATION THAT "ACCORDING TO RECENTLY OBTAINED INFORMATION, WE HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE OR TO

SUPPOSE THAT THE DRUG TRAFFIC FROM MEXICO OR OTHER AMERICAN COUNTRIES TO THE UNITED STATES WILL BE REDUCED IN COMING MONTHS".

(E) "HE ALSO DECLARED THAT THE PILOTS OF AIRCRAFT WHICH CARRY DRUGS TO THIS COUNTRY RECEIVE AN AVERAGE OF 20,000 DOLLARS PER MISSION.

(F)"DURING THE PRESS CONFERENCE, FLUHR NOTED THAT THOSE INTRODUCING DRUGS TO THE UNITED STATES ARE USING EVER INCREASING NUMBERS OF AIRCRAFT.

(G) "THE AERIAL TRANSPORTATION OF DRUGS - PRINCIPALLY MARIJUANA - IS MORE LUCRATIVE, ACCORDING TO THIS OFFICIAL, WHO IS BOTH THE DIRECTOR OF THE INTELLIGENCE CENTER AND A SPECIAL AGENT OF THE DRUG ENFORCEMENT ADMINISTRATION OF UNCLASSIFIED

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THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE.

(H) "THE STUDY SHOWS THAT DRUG TRAFFICKERS IN THIS COUNTRY ARE USING MORE AND LARGER AIRCRAFT, IDENTIFIED BY FLUHR AS "SIMILAR TO THE AIR TRANSPORT AIRCRAFT OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR."

(I) "THOSE LARGE AIRCRAFT ARE THE "LODESTAR" AND "CONSTELLATION" MODELS BUILT BY LOCKHEED.

(J) "WITHOUT DOUBT, HOWEVER, THE MAJORITY OF AIRCRAFT USED BY DRUG TRAFFICKERS ARE OF THE SINGLE-ENGINE OR TWIN-ENGINE TYPE.

(K) "THE MOST COMMON SINGLE-ENGINE AIRCRAFT IS THE "PIPER CHEROKEE", AND THE MOST-USED TWIN-ENGINE PLANE IS THE BEECH 18. THE SINGLE-ENGINE CESSNA 206 AND 210 ARE ALSO USED.

(L) "THE LARGE AIRCRAFT, ACCORDING TO FLUHR, CAN FLY NONSTOP FROM COLOMBIA OR CENTRAL AMERICA TO ARIZONA OR TEXAS WITH HEAVY LOADS.

(M) "THIS INFORMATION, SAID THE OFFICIAL, LEADS TO THE BELIEF THAT THE ILLICIT DRUG TRAFFIC TOWARD THE UNITED STATES WILL BE GREATLY INTENSIFIED IN COMING MONTHS.

(N) "OTHER INDICATIONS, HE EXPLICITLY DECLARED, ARE THE ESTIMATED QUANTITIES OF MARIJUANA PRODUCTION IN MEXICO DURING THE FALL SEASON.

(O) "WE HAVE REASON TO BELIEVE THIS", DECLARED THE INTELLIGENCE CENTER DIRECTOR WHO EXPLAINED THAT THE TASK OF OBTAINING INFORMATION INCLUDED INFORMED MEXICAN SOURCES

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O 270150Z JUL 77  
FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3802  
DEAHQS WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
EPIC EL PASO TX IMMEDIATE

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EPIC PASS ALSO TO JACQUES KIERE

, NOT IDENTIFIED.

(P) "WHILE STATING THAT THE PILOTS RECEIVE "ENORMOUS SUMS" FOR THEIR SERVICES, FLUHR OBSERVED THAT THE RISKS INVOLVE NOT ONLY BEING DISCOVERED AND CAPTURED BUT ALSO THE CHANCE OF ACCIDENTS.

(Q) "FURTHER, THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF ACCIDENTS IN THE LAST TWO YEARS (THROUGH 31 DECEMBER 1976) IS EIGHT FOR EVERY 30 DAYS, VERIFIED BY THE INTELLIGENCE CENTER.

(S) "THE NUMBER OF UNVERIFIED ACCIDENTS IS CONSIDERED

TO BE MUCH GREATER.

(T) "THE ACCIDENTS OCCUR, ACCORDING TO FLUHR, BECAUSE OF OVERLOADED AIRCRAFT, PILOT INEXPERIENCE, WEATHER CONDITIONS, AND INADEQUATE CONDITIONS OF THE RUNWAYS, MANY OF WHICH ARE THE DRY BEDS OF LAKES AND RIVERS."

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3. ACTION REQUESTED: AMBASSADOR IS SCHEDULED TO MAKE INITIAL CALL ON MEXICAN ATTORNEY GENERAL ON THURSDAY, JULY 28 . WE WOULD APPRECIATE IMMEDIATE GUIDANCE ON INTERPRETATION TO BE GIVEN PARAS (C), (D), (M), (N), AND (O). SPECIFICALLY, RE PARA (C): HAS EPIC SENT FINISHED INTELLIGENCE DIRECTLY TO THE GOM? EMBASSY HAS NO RECORD OF PASSING FINISHED EPIC PRODUCT. MAY WE? RE PARA (O): WHAT ARE THE "INFORMED MEXICAN SOURCES"? RE PARAS (D), (M), AND (N): HOW SHOULD THESE STATEMENTS BE INTERPRETED IN LIGHT OF RECENT STATEMENTS BY SENIOR DEA AND OTHER USG OFFICIALS THAT ERADICATION PROGRAM HERE IS CAUSING REDUCTION IN AVAILABILITY IN THE UNITED STATES? RE ENTIRE STORY: WHAT SPECIFIC INFORMATION DOES EPIC HAVE WHICH WOULD INDICATE INCREASE IN TRAFFICKING OVER COMING MONTHS?

4. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE AT LEAST ADVANCE WARNING, IF NOT OPPORTUNITY TO COMMENT ON SUBSTANCE OF FUTURE PRESS STATEMENTS AND PRESS CONFERENCES ON NARCOTICS PROGRAM. LUCEY

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